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INFO RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 1532

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 000568

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/22/2018  
TAGS: [PARM](#) [MNUC](#) [UNGA](#) [NO](#)  
SUBJECT: NORWEGIANS SUPPORT DEALERT RESOLUTION, AND UNHAPPY  
WITH NATO SECRETARIAT

REF: STATE 111744

Classified By: Political Counselor Kristen Bauer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Norway will support the nuclear dealerting UN resolution assuming the text is similar to last year's, which they also supported. Our MFA interlocutor was upset that false rumors had surfaced that Norway would co-sponsor the resolution. He was also unhappy with several statements that he perceived to be misleading in the NATO International Secretariat's 16 October memorandum on Disarmament Resolutions. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Poloff met with Bjorn Midthun, Assistant Director General, MFA section on disarmament and nonproliferation to deliver reftel demarche. Midthun said that he believed that a dealert resolution along the lines of last years' was "balanced" and repeatedly pointed out that it commends nuclear states for recent initiatives and steps taken. Midthun emphasized that these commendations were primarily intended for the US, as "the Russians are the problematic ones."

¶3. (C) Midthun stated that "dealerting is not in conflict with the strategic concept of NATO, and we are encouraged that other members feel the same way."

¶4. (C) Midthun was visibly irritated with several statements in an October 16 Memorandum from the NATO International Secretariat to the NPG Staff Group, DPP(NPD)(2008)0066, on the same subject as reftel. Underlining the relevant passages for poloff, Midthun said that the memorandum is "not written at an acceptable level of precision." In paragraph 3, he pointed to the fact that both of last year's resolutions were mentioned in the same sentence, along with the words "hair-trigger alert" and "limited steps." Midthun said that both of these terms were found only in one of the resolutions--the so-called "India" resolution, and not the dealerting resolution--and that there seemed to be a willful conflation of these two resolutions. Norway did not support the "India" resolution (A/C.1/62/L.21), and Midthun was upset that supporters of the dealert resolution were being lumped together with those talking about "hair trigger" alerts and "limited steps" taken by nuclear powers.

¶5. (C) Furthermore, Midthun spoke at length about the last sentence in paragraph 3, which states, "...given the current state of readiness and the safety and security measures in place, it is impossible for the Alliance's nuclear weapons to be accidentally, unintentionally or inadvertently launched." Midthun said that the word "impossible" was entirely inappropriate as "things can go wrong."

¶6. (C) Elaborating and relaxing somewhat, Midthun said that "fear of accidental launch is not what is driving our support of this dealert resolution." He then spoke about Norway's general ideal of a nuclear-free world, and toward that end, reducing the role of nuclear weapons in the security arena is

a good thing. Poloff discussed our view of the issue, that having weapons on alert is a functional component of our security and deterrence strategy. Midthun had no direct response, but spoke of the symbolic importance of stepping back from a nuclear precipice.

17. (C) Becoming somewhat animated again, Midthun said that rumors of Norway's co-sponsorship of the dealerting resolution were completely false, and that Norway had never intended to co-sponsor the resolution. When asked if it was absolutely certain that Norway would support it, Midthun said that so long as the draft remained in its current form, almost identical to last year's, he believe Norway would support it.

18. (C) Comment: Midthun was upset, apparently not by our demarche but by the NATO memorandum. Poloff got the sense that Midthun genuinely believes that the dealerting resolution is not inconsistent with NATO policy, and the International Secretariat's memo was bullying. Perhaps this, combined with the supposedly false rumors that Norway was going to co-sponsor the resolution, led Midthun to adopt a defensive posture. Post believes there is little chance that the GON can be convinced to abstain or vote no on the dealerting resolution. End comment.

WHITNEY